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ALASKA ECONOMIC TRENDS

Alaska Department of Labor Bill Sheffield, Governor, State of Alaska



Rural Occupation Information

Alaska Economic Trends

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The following notes pertain to Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment Tables:

Government includes teachers in primary and secondary schools, and personnel employed by the University of Alaska.

Benchmark date March 1985

P/ Denotes preliminary estimates

R/ Denotes revised estimates.

Rural Occupation Information

By Edward Eboch and Bruce McHardy

Job opportunities and available labor skills in Alaska vary according to labor market area and community. Large communities usually have an ample number of qualified people available to fill vacant positions quickly and an ample number of job opportunities in any profession to insure a qualified person of finding a job. However, in small communities skilled personnel and job opportunities are limited. In many cases there are only one or two major employers in a community. This is true for all communities in Alaska except Anchorage. Juneau and Fairbanks have a limited number of large firms but their economies are of a size and of a sufficient mix of occupations that required skills and job opportunities are normally available.

Information on occupational opportunities in an area or community is important to governmental agencies, individuals, and private businesses. Program planners use the information to develop programs of study or training to ensure a trained, available local area or community labor force. Alaska's Department of Labor Job Service offices try to match the skills of job seekers with available opportunities. Environmental impact statements use the information to determine the economic impact of new activities. Other agencies find the information useful in operational planning.

In a job search or in making a career choice, where location is an important consideration, it is useful to know what job opportunities exist in a community. Smaller communities usually have limited opportunities in the managerial, professional and technical areas. However, in Alaska because of the strong presence of the state and federal government in many rural areas, opportunities vary according to community.

When choosing a business location, it is useful to know what skills exist in a community. Firms have many reasons for choosing to locate in a particular area or community. One of the more important is the assurance that adequately trained personnel are available to minimize the cost of staffing the operation. In most smaller Alaska communities, the size of the population limits the available work force in any specific occupation.

This article will examine the occupational composition for the rural portions of the state's labor market areas and for those communities with a population of 3,000 or greater. A cutoff of 3,000 was chosen to be able to aggregate the occupations without violating confidentiality laws. Even so, the level of aggregation by occupational group may

not be as detailed as many would like. Upon request, Research and Analysis can provide the occupational composition for other areas or communities of the state.

This article will not cover the occupational composition for Anchorage, Fairbanks or Juneau. For a detailed description of employment by occupation and growth and replacement needs or for information on these excluded communities, see *Alaska Occupational Information*, Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, January 1985. Research and Analysis will be publishing a new *Alaska Occupational Information* later this summer which will contain forecasts to 1990.

Industry Occupation Composition

The composition of occupations for any community depends on the industries in that community. The industry determines the type of jobs available and the labor pool available. As a reference point, Table 1 summarizes the occupational groups by industry for Alaska while Table 2 gives examples of occupations by occupational group. The mining industry is dominated by the oil industry which makes up over 90% of employment in this industry. The composition of occupations looks different for the hard rock mining industry which offers the greatest opportunity for employment growth for smaller communities.

Smaller communities usually have one of three industries as the major employer; seafood processing, mining, or timber, a fourth, government, also makes a major contribution to employment. In a few communities that act as regional centers, government may be the prime employer.

Table 3 is the occupational distribution for the fish processing industry in Alaska. While the occupational mix will vary for a fish processing plant depending on the type of seafood processed, the age of the plant, and whether it processes fresh or frozen fish, the percentages represented tell us that the majority of jobs are in the crafts, operators, and laborers occupational group.

As we examine communities with a strong fishing base, we see that the current occupational mix is dominated by the craft, operator and laborer occupations. Keep in mind that fish harvesting employment is not included in the occupational composition for these areas or communities. Statewide the number of individuals employed in fish harvesting is very close to those in fish processing.

In mining, each operation will vary depending on the extent of mechanization and the type of mineral being mined as well as whether the mine is in the construction or operation stage. There are few large

scale hard rock mines currently in operation in Alaska. Mining is one of the industries that offer potential growth for many rural areas, so it is important to know the occupations associated with a mining operation.

Table 4 is the approximate occupational composition expected for the Red Dog Mine based on the final production stage. The mix of occupations differ between the construction stage and the initial operation phase. Other mining operations will have a different occupational composition but will still be predominately crafts, operators and laborer occupations.

Community Occupation Composition

The next thirteen tables contain the occupational employment information for the rural areas and communities of the state. There are separate tables for communities in each labor market area that had a population greater than 3,000 in 1984. The labor market area tables include data for the remainder of the labor market area. Table 5 presents the occupational composition of the MatSu Borough (the Anchorage/MatSu labor market area less Anchorage) and Table 6 presents the Interior labor market area (Interior less Fairbanks). These two labor market areas have no communities with a population greater than 3,000 except Anchorage and Fairbanks.

Within the Southeast labor market area, two communities are reported separately—Sitka and Ketchikan. Both these communities are strongly influenced by the timber and fishing industries; this influence is reflected in the occupational composition of these communities. Over half the current occupations are in the professional and technical and crafts, operators and laborers groups. The remainder of the Southeast labor market area (Table 7) also shows the influence of the fishing industry on their occupational composition.

The best prospects for future growth in the Southeast are in fishing, timber and mining. Two of the most likely mining projects in Alaska are in the Southeast, Greens Creek near Juneau and Quartz Hill near Ketchikan. The occupational mix for mining is somewhat similar to the existing occupational composition of these communities.

The Gulf Coast labor market area, excluding Kenai, Kodiak, and Valdez, (Table 10) also shows the importance of the fishing industry on occupational composition. The three excluded communities have a similar distribution of occupations and are impacted by other major employers as well. Kenai's composition of occupations, while influenced by the seafood industry, also shows the influence of the oil industry, which has relatively large professional and technical, and

services occupational groups. Kodiak's economy has a strong seafood industry but also has a large federal government (Coast Guard/1) contingency that increases their professional and technical occupations above what one might expect in a community of that size. Major employers in Valdez include fish harvesting, government, and the oil industry.

Only one community in both the Northern and Southwest regions had a population above the cutoff point. Employment in the Northern region and therefore the occupational composition, is dominated by the oil industry and related construction activities. The economies of the Southwest communities are predominately supported by the fishing industry. Nome in the Northern and Bethel in the Southwest labor market areas act as regional centers and as a result over half the occupations are in government (local, state, and federal). Services and trade related occupations are also much greater as a result of being a regional center.

Conclusion

Prospects for economic development in the rural communities of Alaska are dependent on natural resources. Mining offers the greatest long range opportunities while fishing and forestry offers the better short range opportunities to most smaller communities. The current occupational composition of these areas suggest that new projects will be able to find individuals with the desired occupational skills even if the work force is small. Individuals considering a career choice should examine both the areas industries, existing and potential, and the occupational composition of these industries as well as the occupational composition of their communities.

1/ The Coast Guard is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation. All other noncivilian military is excluded.

Table 2
Examples of Occupations
by Occupation Group

Officers and Managers

Education Administrators, Food Service, Lodging, Financial,
and Construction Managers

Professional and Technical

Accountants, Teachers, Computer Programers, Lawyers,
Purchasing Agents, Economists, Social Workers

Sales

Sales Clerks, Cashiers, Travel Agents

Clerical

Secretaries, Tellers, General Office Clerks, Hotel Desk
Clerks, Data Entry Clerks

Services

Janitors, Guards, Barbers, Bartenders, Cooks, Dental
Assistants

Agricultural and Forestry

Choke Setters, Nursery Workers

Crafts, Operators, and Laborers

Cannery Workers, Bus Drivers, Electricians, Automotive
Mechanics, Home Appliance Repair Persons, Dry Cleaning
Persons, Seamen, Material Movers

1/ For a more detailed description of occupations see Occupa-
tional Employment Statistics Dictionary, Bureau of Labor Statis-
tics, U.S. Department of Labor.

Table 3
Occupational Employment in Fish Processing /1

Occupational Group	Total Employment	Percent
Officers & Managers	183	1.8
Professional & Technical	93	0.9
Sales	16	0.2
Clerical	420	4.2
Service	365	3.7
Agriculture & Forestry	298	3.0
Crafts, Operators & Laborer	8,560	86.2
Total Occupational Employment	9,935	100.0

1/Based on a 1983 Manufacturing survey.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Occupational Information Unit, Occupational Employment Statistics Survey.

Table 4
**Annual Average Employment
by Occupational Group 1/
Red Dog Mine**

Occupational Group	Employment	Percent
Officers & Managers	7	1.6
Professional & Technical	35	8.3
Sales	N/A	N/A
Clerical	35	8.3
Services	40	9.4
Agricultural & Forestry	N/A	N/A
Crafts, Operators & Laborer	307	72.4
Total Occupational Employment	424	100.0

1/ Cominco Alaska, Inc. use different categories to group occupations so that the above table is only an approximation using Research and Analysis's categories.

Source: Final Environmental Impact Statement, Red Dog Mine, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Department of Interior, 1984.

Table 5
Occupational Employment Composition
by Major Occupational Groups
Matsu Borough
1985

Occupational Group	Total Employment	Percent
Officers & Managers	484	7.5
Professional & Technical	1,363	21.2
Sales	839	13.0
Clerical	1,083	16.8
Service	1,052	16.3
Agriculture & Forestry	18	.3
Crafts, Operators & Laborer	1,605	24.9
Total Occupational Employment	6,444	100.0

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Occupational Information Unit.

Table 6
Occupational Employment Composition
by Major Occupational Groups
Interior 1/
1985

Occupational Group	Total Employment	Percent
Officers & Managers	272	8.0
Professional & Technical	953	27.9
Sales	154	4.5
Clerical	493	14.4
Service	586	17.1
Agriculture & Forestry	13	.4
Crafts, Operators & Laborer	949	27.7
Total Occupational Employment	3,420	100.0

1/ Excludes Fairbanks North Star Borough

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Occupational Information Unit.

Table 7
Occupational Employment Composition
by Major Occupational Groups
Southeast 1/
1985

Occupational Group	Total Employment	Percent
Officers & Managers	343	6.5
Professional & Technical	887	16.9
Sales	353	6.7
Clerical	551	10.5
Service	768	14.6
Agriculture & Forestry	510	9.7
Crafts, Operators & Laborer	1850	35.2
Total Occupational Employment	5,262	100.0

1/ Excludes Juneau, Sitka, and Ketchikan

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Occupational Information Unit.

Table 8
Occupational Employment Composition
by Major Occupational Groups
Sitka
1985

Occupational Group	Total Employment	Percent
Officers & Managers	236	7.1
Professional & Technical	863	25.8
Sales	180	5.4
Clerical	435	13.0
Service	502	15.0
Agriculture & Forestry	91	2.7
Crafts, Operators & Laborer	1,035	31.0
Total Occupational Employment	3,342	100.0

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Occupational Information Unit.

Table 1
Industry Occupational Composition
by Major Occupational Groups
Statewide
1985 1/

Percent Distribution by Industry

Occupational Group	Mining	Constr.	Mfg.	Trans, Comm, Utilities	Trade	Finance, Insur, & Real Estate	Services	Government	Total
Officers & Managers	6.4	6.3	3.2	7.0	7.3	10.2	7.4	7.0	7.0
Professional & Technical	28.1	5.8	3.2	7.9	3.0	13.7	29.6	42.5	21.2
Sales	0.6	0.9	2.4	5.6	33.3	9.1	4.0	0.5	8.8
Clerical	10.1	9.7	7.2	26.3	11.2	57.7	20.6	22.0	19.2
Service	1.6	0.7	3.7	3.3	28.8	3.2	26.4	11.9	14.9
Agriculture & Forestry	0.0	0.2	6.9	0.0	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.5	0.9
Crafts, Operators & Laborers	53.2	76.5	73.7	49.8	15.9	5.4	11.5	15.6	28.0
Total Occupational Employment	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Percent Employment by Industry	4.0	8.5	6.8	8.2	20.9	5.2	17.9	28.4	100.0

1/ All data adjusted to 1985 employment levels. Year of survey was 1982 (Federal Government), 1983 (Mfg.), 1984 (Mining, Construction, Finance, Insurance & Real Estate), and 1985 (Transportation, Communication and Utilities, and Trade).

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Occupational Information Unit.

Table 9
Occupational Employment Composition
by Major Occupational Groups
Ketchikan
1985

Occupational Group	Total Employment	Percent
Officers & Managers	339	6.3
Professional & Technical	1,143	21.3
Sales	490	9.1
Clerical	814	15.1
Service	788	14.7
Agriculture & Forestry	166	3.1
Crafts, Operators & Laborer	1,634	30.4
Total Occupational Employment	5,374	100.0

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Occupational Information Unit.

Table 10
Occupational Employment Composition
by Major Occupational Groups
Gulf Coast 1/
1985

Occupational Group	Total Employment	Percent
Officers & Managers	128	5.0
Professional & Technical	309	12.1
Sales	124	4.9
Clerical	365	14.3
Service	334	13.1
Agriculture & Forestry	116	4.5
Crafts, Operators & Laborer	1,147	46.0
Total Occupational Employment	2,550	100.0

1/ Excludes Kenai, Kodiak, and Valdez

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Occupational Information Unit.

Table 11
Occupational Employment Composition
by Major Occupational Groups
Kenai
1985

Occupational Group	Total Employment	Percent
Officers & Managers	553	5.4
Professional & Technical	1,662	16.3
Sales	942	9.3
Clerical	1,465	14.4
Service	1,505	14.8
Agriculture & Forestry	46	.5
Crafts, Operators & Laborer	4,004	39.3
Total Occupational Employment	10,177	100.0

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Occupational Information Unit.

Table 12
Occupational Employment Composition
by Major Occupational Groups
Kodiak
1985

Occupational Group	Total Employment	Percent
Officers & Managers	337	6.3
Professional & Technical	978	18.2
Sales	324	6.0
Clerical	705	13.1
Service	791	14.7
Agriculture & Forestry	141	2.6
Crafts, Operators & Laborer	2,092	39.0
Total Occupational Employment	5,368	100.0

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Occupational Information Unit.

Table 13
Occupational Employment Composition
by Major Occupational Groups
Valdez
1985

Occupational Group	Total Employment	Percent
Officers & Managers	107	6.3
Professional & Technical	251	14.9
Sales	77	4.6
Clerical	233	13.8
Service	328	19.4
Agriculture & Forestry	13	.8
Crafts, Operators & Laborer	681	40.3
Total Occupational Employment	1,690	100.0

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Occupational Information Unit.

Table 14
Occupational Employment Composition
by Major Occupational Groups
Northern 1/
1985

Occupational Group	Total Employment	Percent
Officers & Managers	542	5.0
Professional & Technical	2,056	18.9
Sales	249	2.3
Clerical	1,188	10.9
Service	1,314	12.1
Agriculture & Forestry	4	0.0
Crafts, Operators & Laborer	5,497	50.7
Total Occupational Employment	10,850	100.0

1/ Excludes Nome

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Occupational Information Unit.

Table 15
Occupational Employment Composition
by Major Occupational Groups
Nome
1985

Occupational Group	Total Employment	Percent
Officers & Managers	150	6.1
Professional & Technical	777	31.4
Sales	118	4.8
Clerical	400	16.2
Service	427	17.3
Agriculture & Forestry	6	.2
Crafts, Operators & Laborer	597	24.1
Total Occupational Employment	2,475	100.0

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Occupational Information Unit.

Table 16
Occupational Employment Composition
by Major Occupational Groups
Southwest 1/
1985

Occupational Group	Total Employment	Percent
Officers & Managers	467	4.9
Professional & Technical	1,408	14.7
Sales	251	2.6
Clerical	887	9.3
Service	1,037	10.9
Agriculture & Forestry	102	1.1
Crafts, Operators & Laborer	5,403	56.5
Total Occupational Employment	9,555	100.0

1/ Excludes Bethel

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Occupational Information Unit.

Table 17
Occupational Employment Composition
by Major Occupational Groups
Bethel
1985

Occupational Group	Total Employment	Percent
Officers & Managers	226	6.6
Professional & Technical	1,270	37.0
Sales	144	4.2
Clerical	519	15.1
Service	662	19.3
Agriculture & Forestry	1	0.0
Crafts, Operators & Laborer	610	17.8
Total Occupational Employment	3,432	100.0

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Occupational Information Unit.

Alaska

By Edward Eboch

Current Trends

Alaska is experiencing its normal seasonal increase in employment but the seasonal rebound is not sufficient to mask the weakness in Alaska's economy. While employment is up 4,900 in May, it is down 2,300 from May of 1985. The loss in employment over the year is a result of cutbacks in state expenditures, cutbacks in oil company activities, and the psychological effect of the disappointing economic news about Alaska's economy.

The construction industry is reeling from a double blow. Besides the impact of the loss of state funded projects, oil companies are cutting back North Slope projects where possible. So far, cuts in oil related employment have been concentrated in the oil services sector of oil and gas. However, the result is a much greater drop in construction employment than anticipated earlier. The surprise is the strength in residential construction in light of the overbuilding in most communities.

Detailed analysis of the data shows declines in employment in these construction support sectors as well: construction equipment, furniture and home furnishings, lumber and other construction materials, hardware, plumbing and heating materials in the trade industry; engineers and architects in the service industry; local trucking in the transportation industry; and real estate operators and developers in the finance, insurance and real estate industry.

While much of the drop in employment in trade and in the various sectors of services and finance, insurance and real estate can be directly attributed to declines in construction, there is evidence that consumers reluctance to spend has also impacted these industries. Most of the loss in employment in trade is in construction support businesses. All the durable goods sectors of wholesale trade have year to year declines in employment including motor vehicle suppliers; furniture and home furnishings; lumber and other construction materials; electrical goods; hardware, plumbing and heating; and machinery and equipment supplies. Employment in the nondurable goods sector of wholesale trade has employment gains over the year.

The same is happening in retail trade. The durable goods sectors are experiencing declines in employment while the nondurable sectors have increases in employment. Declines in employment in the durable goods sectors of retail trade include both construction related as well as consumer related durable goods, suggesting that consumers

**Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment
By Place of Work
Alaska**

	Changes From:				
	p/ 5/86	r/ 4/86	5/85	4/86	5/85
Nonag. Wage & Salary	229700	224800	232000	4900	-2300
Mining	8700	9000	9500	-300	-800
Construction	15200	14000	18000	1200	-2800
Manufacturing	12100	10100	12100	2000	0
Food & Kindred Prod.	6000	4100	6000	1900	0
Lumber & Paper Prod.	2700	2600	2600	100	100
All Other Mfg.	3400	3400	3500	0	-100
Trans. Comm. & Utilities	19600	18300	19600	1300	0
Trucking & Whseing.	2300	2100	2200	200	100
Water Transportation	1600	1300	1500	300	100
Air Transportation	6400	6000	6400	400	0
Other Trans. Comm. & Utilities	9300	8900	9500	400	-200
Trade	45700	44500	46100	1200	-400
Wholesale	8400	8300	8800	100	-400
Retail	37300	36200	37300	1100	0
Gen. Mer. & Apparel	5200	5100	5200	100	0
Food Stores	6300	6000	6100	300	200
Eating & Drinking Pl.	13900	13400	13600	500	300
Other Retail Trade	11900	11700	12400	200	-500
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	13100	13000	12700	100	400
Services & Misc.	46000	45400	45100	600	900
Government	69300	70500	68900	-1200	400
Federal	18000	17800	17700	200	300
State	19600	21000	19800	-1400	-200
Local	31700	31700	31400	0	300

Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.
Government includes teachers in primary and secondary schools, and personnel employed by the University of Alaska.

Benchmark Date March 1985.

p/ Denotes primary estimates.

r/ Denotes revised estimates.

Labor Force By Region and Census Area

	Labor Force			Unemployment			Rate			Employment		
	P/ 5/86	R/ 4/86	5/85	P/ 5/86	R/ 4/86	5/85	P/ 5/86	R/ 4/86		P/ 5/86	R/ 4/86	5/85
Alaska Statewide	265455	262081	252188	28316	29812	23792	10.7	11.4	9.4	237139	232269	228396
Anch. MatSu Region	140327	139756	134495	13643	13803	11111	9.7	9.9	8.3	126684	125953	123385
Anchorage Borough	122898	122281	117956	10852	10873	8828	8.8	8.9	7.5	112046	111408	109128
MatSu Borough	17429	17485	16540	2791	2930	2283	16.0	16.8	13.8	14638	14555	14257
Gulf Coast Region	29461	27802	27151	3993	4469	3240	13.6	16.1	11.9	25468	23333	23911
Kenai Peninsula Bor	18868	17698	17138	3115	3266	2348	16.5	18.5	13.7	15753	14432	14790
Kodiak Island Bor	6685	6273	6341	542	648	574	8.1	10.3	9.1	6143	5628	5767
Valdez-Cordova	3908	3831	3672	336	558	318	8.6	14.6	8.7	3572	3273	3354
Interior Region	41619	41155	39006	5690	5979	4930	13.7	14.5	12.6	35929	35176	34076
Fairbanks North Star Br	33916	33413	31677	4882	4987	4140	14.4	14.9	13.1	29034	28426	27537
Southeast Fairbanks	3273	3274	3057	340	403	275	10.4	12.3	9.0	2933	2871	2782
Yukon-Koyukuk	4430	4468	4272	468	589	515	10.6	13.2	12.1	3962	3879	3757
Northern Region	8245	8504	8158	927	1072	758	11.2	12.6	9.3	7318	7432	7400
Kobuk	2596	2675	2558	306	349	242	11.8	13.0	9.5	2290	2326	2316
Nome	3520	3643	3438	465	541	350	13.2	14.9	10.2	3055	3102	3088
North Slope Borough	2129	2186	2162	156	182	166	7.3	8.3	7.7	1973	2004	1996
Southeast Region	34324	33548	32729	3109	3364	2991	9.1	10.0	9.1	31215	30184	29738
Haines Borough	1067	1088	1041	93	147	113	8.7	13.5	10.9	974	941	928
Juneau Borough	13552	13183	12809	1206	1245	1048	8.9	9.4	8.2	12346	11938	11761
Ketchikan Gateway Bor	7334	7144	6958	686	717	626	9.4	10.0	9.0	6648	6427	6332
Pr. of Wales-Outer Ketch	2579	2514	2464	311	321	304	12.1	12.8	12.3	2268	2193	2160
Sitka Borough	4182	4032	3959	318	295	277	7.6	7.3	7.0	3864	3737	3682
Skagway-Yakutat-Angoon	2040	2064	1985	224	308	255	11.0	14.9	12.8	1816	1756	1730
Wrangell-Petersburg	3570	3523	3513	269	331	368	7.5	9.4	10.5	3301	3192	3145
Southwest Region	11479	11306	10648	954	1125	762	8.3	10.0	7.2	10525	10181	9886
Aleutian Islands	2668	2610	2478	96	122	62	3.6	4.7	2.5	2572	2488	2416
Bethel	4535	4457	4184	453	508	350	10.0	11.4	8.4	4082	3949	3834
Bristol Bay Borough	438	445	409	29	50	25	6.6	11.2	6.1	409	395	384
Dillingham	1964	1966	1846	149	211	142	7.6	10.7	7.7	1815	1755	1704
Wade Hampton	1874	1828	1731	227	234	183	12.1	12.8	10.6	1647	1594	1548

P/ Preliminary R/ Revised 1985 Benchmark

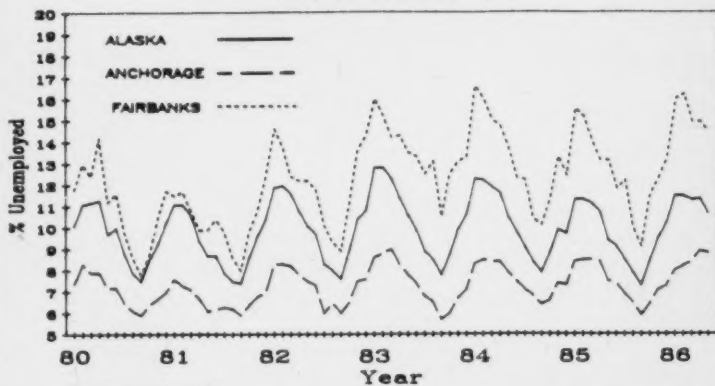
Federal guidelines require the use of unrounded labor force data, adjusted to be consistent with the Current Population Survey (CPS) in formulas used to allocate federal funds. Comparisons between different time periods are not as meaningful as other time series published by the Alaska Department of Labor, because Alaska's CPS sample size is inadequate to accurately indicate monthly changes in level. The sampling errors are random in nature, meaning that the unemployment rates, in any given month, are as likely to be high as frequently as they are low. The official definitions of unemployment, currently in place, exclude anyone who has made no attempt to find work in the four week period up to and including the week that includes the twelfth of each month. Most economists feel that Alaska's bush localities have proportionately more of these discouraged workers.

are unwilling to invest in big ticket items with the uncertainty about the state's economy. Information from the banking sector show that individual saving accounts have increased. The overbuilding and reluctance to purchase houses is evident in lower house prices and lower rents as well as lower employment in the real estate sector and small declines in employment in the banking sector.

Conclusion

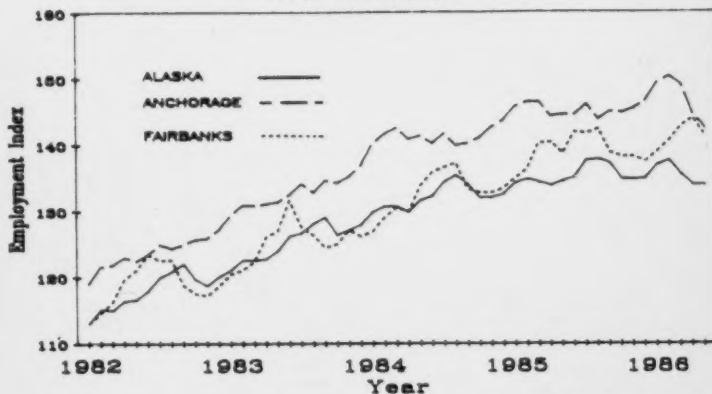
Alaska's businesses are beginning to feel the affects of lower oil prices. The impact is beginning to be felt beyond state government, the oil industry, and construction. With the uncertainty about the ability of the state to weather the current economic crisis, individuals are beginning to spend less on durable goods, houses, and to a lesser extent on other consumer goods. While the banner year in tourism will help delay the impacts of less state expenditures and less oil activities the state appears to be entering a period of economic contraction. At this time the year to year losses in employment are not expected to continue but there is little prospect for employment growth. Now, with Congress trying to cut federal expenditures, uncertainty about the expanded military presence in Alaska has raised additional concerns. While an increase in oil prices would improve the economic outlook, the uncertainty created by the recent price collapse will dampen any recovery in the near term.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED 1980 to Present



source: Ak. Dept. of Labor

Composite Nonag. Employment Indexes Seasonally Adjusted 1982 to Present



source: Ak. Dept. of Labor

Anchorage/MatSu

By Greg Huff

Anchorage Employment Declines

May preliminary employment estimates for Anchorage show employment declined by 2,300, a 2% drop from the levels of the previous year. Not since 1979 has May employment been below the levels of the previous year. This represents an end to a period of expansion and the beginning of a recessionary period, the second in the past decade. The last period of employment declines for Anchorage began in October 1978 and ended in March 1980.

Prior to May, 1986 employment levels were above that of 1985, but the generally robust month of May was rather dismal as normal seasonal employment increases did not materialize (see graph). During the past five years, employment gains in May ranged from 1.6% to 2.7%. This year, the gain was less than 0.2%. Seasonal increases in construction, food processing and retail trade employment usually offset summer layoffs of the University of Alaska and the Anchorage Community College; however, this was not the case this year.

Contraction of the Anchorage economy has been caused by falling oil prices and declining construction activity. Although declining oil prices are an important factor affecting construction activity, a downturn in construction employment was inevitable due to the oversupply of commercial, retail and, in particular, housing space.

Declines in residential building permits began in 1984 when oil prices were nearly double what they are today; however, the downturn in construction employment is more acute as a result of falling oil prices. Declines in the state capital budget and pessimistic expectations of the times ahead have discouraged investments in the private sector. Over 2,200 jobs have been lost in the construction industry and approximately 400 additional jobs have been lost in the industries providing equipment, building materials, and services to the construction industry.

Falling oil prices have had an adverse affect on the oil industry. Mining employment declined by 250 in May and is below the year-ago level by the same amount. Most of the declines were based in oil field service companies that provide drilling, exploration or other services to the major producers. Cutbacks on manufacturing and assembly of equipment used in the oil fields will occur almost exclusively outside Anchorage and will have little impact on employment in other sectors of the economy.

**Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment
By Place of Work
Anchorage**

	Changes From:				
	p/ 5/86	r/ 4/86	5/85	4/86	5/85
Nonag. Wage & Salary	111900	111700	114200	200	-2300
Mining	4000	4250	4250	-250	-250
Construction	6350	5750	8550	600	-2200
Manufacturing	2750	2450	2850	300	-100
Food & Kindred Prod.	700	450	700	250	0
Other Mfg.	2050	2000	2150	50	-100
Trans. Comm. & Utilities	9900	9500	10350	400	-450
Trucking & Whseing.	1150	1100	1200	50	-50
Water Transportation	350	300	350	50	0
Air Transportation	4050	3850	4100	200	-50
Other Trans. Comm. & Utilities	4350	4250	4700	100	-350
Trade	27100	26800	27250	300	-150
Wholesale	6200	6250	6600	-50	-400
Retail	20900	20550	20650	350	250
Gen. Merchandise	1800	1850	1850	-50	-50
Food Stores	3000	3000	3000	0	0
Eating & Drinking Pl.	8100	7800	8000	300	100
Other Retail Trade	8000	7900	7800	100	200
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	8750	8700	8700	50	50
Services & Misc.	26550	26950	26100	-400	450
Government	26500	27300	26150	-800	350
Federal	9900	10050	9800	-150	100
State	6900	7550	6950	-650	-50
Local	9700	9700	9400	0	300

**Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment
By Place of Work
Anchorage-MatSu**

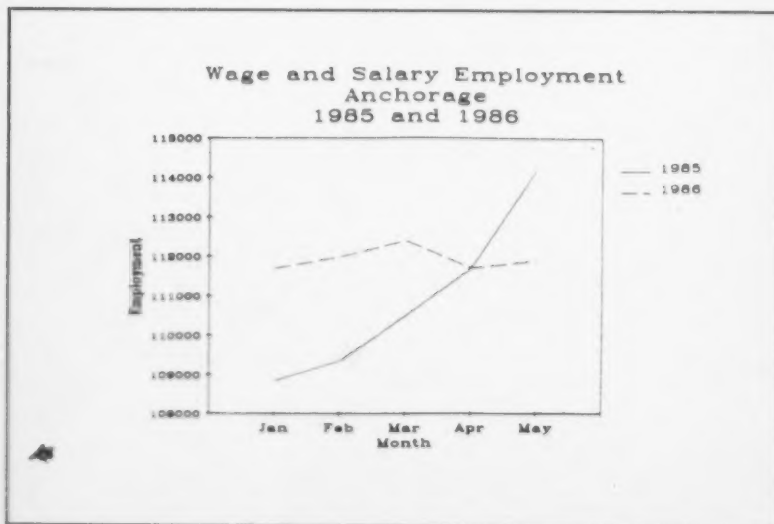
	Changes From:				
	p/ 5/86	r/ 4/86	5/85	4/86	5/85
Nonag. Wage & Salary	119400	119400	121650	0	-2250
Mining	4000	4300	4300	-300	-300
Construction	7000	6400	9200	600	-2200
Manufacturing	2850	2550	2950	300	-100
Trans. Comm. & Utilities	10600	10200	11000	400	-400
Trade	29000	28750	29150	250	-150
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	9350	9300	9250	50	100
Services & Misc.	27650	28150	27350	-500	300
Government	28950	29750	28450	-800	500

State and local government employment is also adversely affected by declining oil prices. State employment declined in May, and with the new fiscal year beginning in July, more layoffs are expected. Since local government receives revenue sharing and debt relief among other benefits from the state, both the school district and municipality will face budget constraints in the upcoming fiscal year, certain to cause layoffs.

A mix of technological changes and economic woes have contributed to significant employment declines in the communications and utility sectors; however, the transportation sector has remained relatively stable.

Conclusion

Anchorage has entered another phase of the economic cycle. Wage and salary employment in May 1986 was below the May 1985 level and year to year declines are expected to continue into 1987. While the Anchorage/MatSu unemployment rate of 9.7% was down slightly from last month's 9.9% rate, it was much higher than last May's rate of 8.3%. This is reflected in the increased number of unemployed workers in the region. There were 2,000 more unemployed workers this May than a year ago in Anchorage. There were 500 more unemployed this year than last year in the MatSu Borough. Anchorage's economy has been slow before, but has not experienced its last expansionary period. Only the time frame of the next upswing is in question.



Fairbanks/Interior

By Neal Fried

Fairbanks' 1986 Capital Budget

The news concerning the state's capital budget this year was a source of great anxiety. This anxiety was well founded considering the dramatic fall in oil prices and the role the capital budgets play in Alaska's local economies. Now that most of the budget cloud has cleared, the capital budget shortfall is not as great as many predicted. The state's capital budget is approximately 25% smaller in FY87 (July 1986 to June 1987) than in FY86. Fairbanks' share of the capital budget adds up to approximately \$71 million, an almost identical level to last year's. There is one major accounting hitch to this comparison, and that is the reappropriation bill.

Though this year's "official" capital budget bill (HCS CSSB 171) has an allocation level for Fairbanks similar to the FY86 level, if the reappropriation bills are considered (SCS CSHB 195 in FY86 and SCS CSHB 574 in FY87) the outlook changes. The reappropriation bill, which is separate from the capital budget, uses funds from past operating and capital budget bills that were not spent. These reappropriation bills complicate the comparison of capital budgets from year to year because they may use funds allocated in any past year, affecting the level of past allocation. Although this makes it impossible to make precise annual capital budget comparisons, a rough estimate can be made.

If we consider the combined capital allocations and reappropriation bills, Fairbanks' capital budget was \$78 million in 1986, compared to \$97 million in 1985, which represents a 20% decline. This smaller budget will exacerbate declines already taking place in residential and commercial sectors of Fairbanks' construction industry. To keep the capital budget as large as it was in 1986 the state drew upon several one time sources of income such as the settlement of the Trans Alaska Pipeline System litigation to supplement the FY87 budget. Supplementing will be more difficult next year because these pools of wealth will not be readily available. At the same time, oil revenues flowing into the state treasury continue to shrink.

The FY87 capital budget for Fairbanks is larger than FY81 (\$67 million) and FY83 (\$56 million), which were once considered generous. (The FY81 capital budget bill was commonly referred to as the "Christmas Tree bill" because there was "something for everyone.") Though FY87's capital budget is not a growth budget, it is large considering the precipitous decline in oil prices. The decline in the capital budg-

**Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment
By Place of Work
Fairbanks**

	Changes From:				
	p/ 5/86	x/ 4/86	5/85	4/86	5/85
Nonag. Wage & Salary	29900	29450	29250	450	650
Mining	200	100	200	100	0
Construction	3100	2750	3200	350	-100
Manufacturing	600	600	550	0	50
Trans. Comm. & Utilities	2900	2750	2850	150	50
Trucking & Whseing.	500	450	500	50	0
Air Transportation	900	900	850	0	50
Other Trans. Comm. & Utilities	1500	1400	1500	100	0
Trade	6400	6150	6200	250	200
Wholesale	1000	950	1000	50	0
Retail	5400	5200	5200	200	200
Gen. Mer. & Apparel	550	550	500	0	50
Food Stores	850	850	800	0	50
Other Retail Trade	4000	3900	3900	200	100
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	1100	1100	1000	0	100
Services & Misc.	5950	5950	5700	0	250
Government	9650	10050	9650	-400	100
Federal	2900	2750	2850	150	50
State	3750	4300	3850	550	-100
Local	3000	3000	2850	0	150

**Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment
By Place of Work
Interior**

	Changes From:				
	p/ 5/86	x/ 4/86	5/85	4/86	5/85
Nonag. Wage & Salary	33650	33050	33250	600	400
Mining	300	250	300	50	0
Construction	3150	2900	3300	250	-150
Manufacturing	600	600	600	0	0
Trans. Comm. & Utilities	3200	2950	3200	250	0
Trade	6750	6500	6600	250	150
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	1150	1150	1050	0	100
Services & Misc.	6350	6300	6100	50	250
Government	12150	12400	12100	-250	50

et will not be felt immediately because of the lag time of projects being completed from past years.

A bright spot for Fairbanks' construction picture is the planned military related construction. Presently, there is some question whether the funds will become available because of efforts to cut military expenditures. If the military's planned capital expenditures come to fruition in 1987-88, they could help compensate for the state budget shortfalls.

Not all of Fairbanks' capital construction budget funds are earmarked for construction, though it is the major beneficiary. Approximately 86% of the capital budget goes to construction. More than 75 separate appropriations for Fairbanks were made in the combined bills. A total of 14 projects exceed \$1 million each. The single largest appropriation was \$17.9 million for the Geist Road extension and the smallest was \$1000 for a personal computer for the Community Food Bank. For further detail, request a copy of the summary of HB574 and SB171 from your Legislative Information Office.

Current Trends

Fairbanks' unemployment rate is down slightly for May, but remains more than one percentage point above previous year levels. The May unemployment rate for 1986 is 14.4% compared to 13.1% in May 1985. The number of unemployed people in Fairbanks has increased from 4,140 last May to 4,882 for the same month in 1986. This represents a 16% increase in the number of unemployed.

Fairbanks' wage and salary employment however, continues to increase, albeit slowly, as a result of an increased work force. Construction, mining and state government employment have registered losses while the remaining industries are on the plus side. Overall, wage and salary employment for Fairbanks was 600 above last year.

Gulf Coast

By Neal Fried

Seward — A Late Bloomer

Employment data for Seward indicates that the city did not miss Alaska's recent boom. During the early 1980s, Seward's economy began to expand along with the rest of the state. Seward's economy stalled in 1983, while much of the remainder of the state was reaching its peak economic performance. In 1984 Seward's economy began to improve and this momentum continued through 1985 (the most recent employment statistics for the City of Seward).

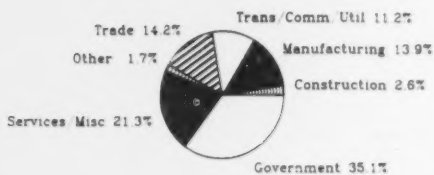
From 1980 to 1985 Seward's employment grew 21% compared to 35% statewide and 46% borough-wide. Given present trends, Seward's economic growth may catch up to and even surpass the state's growth. Seward's economy began exhibiting some vigor again in 1984, while the statewide economy started to show signs of weakness. Seward's economy continues to buck statewide trends in 1986. As employment in the state declines, employment in Seward continues to increase.

Seward's economy will continue to grow in 1986 because of construction of the new \$44 million maximum security prison. Presently there are 103 construction workers on the project. More significantly, when the prison is completed in the fall of 1987, there will be approximately 196 new jobs in Seward. There are discussions to double the size of the prison so that it would accommodate 640 inmates instead of 320. If this happens, eight additional personnel will be needed.

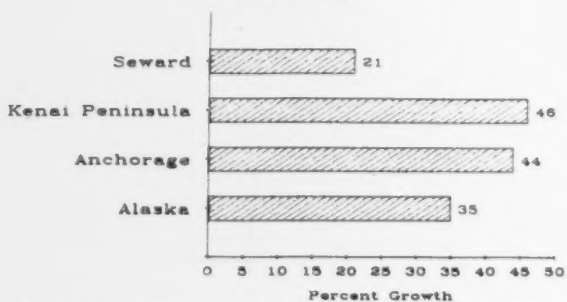
Considering these numbers alone, the 1986 wage and salary work force will be up 15%. The multiplier effect will foster additional employment. More importantly, these jobs will provide stability to Seward's seasonal economy. Not only will Seward's employment statistics be bucking the statewide employment trends in 1986, but it appears they will continue to do so through 1988.

Although employment will grow in Seward, there will be downward pressure on some industries. State and local government's budgets are heavily dependent on state oil revenues. As a result, there will be pressure to cut back local government expenditures in the near future. The present slowdown in the state's economy could mean less freight will be coming through Seward's port. These countervailing economic winds will offset some of the growth the prison will bring to Seward.

City of Seward Employment by Industry 1985



Wage and Salary Employment Percent Growth 1980-1985



Source: Alaska Dept of Labor, Research & Analysis Section

**Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment
By Place of Work
Gulf Coast**

Changes From:

	p/ 5/86	r/ 4/86	5/85	4/86	5/85
Nonag. Wage & Salary	21500	19750	21200	1750	300
Mining	800	800	850	0	-50
Construction	1950	1700	1900	250	50
Manufacturing	3200	2050	3350	1150	-150
Food & Kindred Prod.	2550	1400	2650	1150	-100
All Other Mfg.	650	650	700	0	-50
Trans. Comm. & Utilities	1750	1800	1750	-50	0
Trade	4100	3750	3900	350	200
Wholesale	500	450	500	50	0
Retail	3600	3300	3400	300	200
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	650	650	650	0	0
Services & Misc.	3400	3250	3250	150	150
Government	5650	5750	5550	-100	100
Federal	600	550	500	50	100
State	1500	1600	1550	-100	-50
Local	3550	3600	3500	-50	50½

Tourism from Anchorage residents may also suffer as a result of present economic woes. There are some factors that should offset this possible scenario. The military is expanding its recreation center in Seward to help accommodate the new light infantry division. This may stave off some loss of Alaskan tourists. An increase in out-of-state tourist could also help to make up for any shortfalls. Twenty-two tour ships are expected to dock in Seward this year, three times last year's number.

In spite of the fact that Seward's employment outlook is positive, opportunities for jobs will be mixed. Many of Seward's jobs are seasonal, particularly in the fishing and tourism industries. Job openings are quickly filled because there are still more people looking for work than there are job opportunities.

Though no specific unemployment rate for the City of Seward is calculated, the Kenai Peninsula Borough's unemployment rate reaches as high as 18.6% during the winter months. While the new jobs will provide some stability to the local job market and offer some job opportunities, it will not eliminate Seward's unemployment problems.

**City of Seward
Wage and Salary Employment
1980* and 1985**

	1980	1985	Percent Growth 1980-1985
Total	1019	1232	21%
Mining	**	**	**
Construction	32	32	0%
Manufacturing	243	171	-30%
Transportation	45	138	210%
Trade	141	175	24%
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	**	**	**
Services & Misc.	177	262	48%
Government	337	433	28%
Federal	34	39	15%
State	194	241	24%
Local	109	154	41%

* The wage and salary statistics in this table are different from the statistics presented in the January 1984 issue of the *Alaska Economic Trends*. They represent employment only within the boundaries of the City of Seward and have been revised as additional information became available.

** Nondisclosable

Current Trends

All of the area's unemployment rates fell by two points or more in May as many of the region's seasonal industries began to gear up for summer. The halibut and herring fisheries were active in May and the fishing industry was readying itself for the salmon season. The first large groups of tourists also began to arrive.

The Kodiak and Valdez-Cordova unemployment rates for May (8.1% and 8.6%) were below year-ago levels. However, the overall Kenai-Peninsula Borough unemployment rate of 16.5% is almost three points above last May's rate. Though employment in the Borough may be continuing to increase, it is at a much slower pace than in past years. The slower growth in job openings cannot keep up with the demand for new jobs, pushing the unemployment rate higher.

Southeast Alaska

By John Boucher

Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan Employment 1981-1985

The Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan census area encompasses the southern most area of Alaska. Geographically, it is best described as the area surrounding the Ketchikan Gateway Borough. Its boundaries are the Canadian border to the east and south, Prince of Wales and its outer islands to the west, and a mountain ridge which stretches from Cleveland Peninsula to Lewis Cass Mountain on the north.

The population of this census area in July of 1984 was 4,652, making it the third smallest of the seven Southeast Alaska areas in terms of population. Statewide, it ranks twentieth out of 23 census areas in population. About 70% of the census areas population lives on Prince of Wales and surrounding islands, predominantly in the communities of Craig, Hydaburg, Klawock and Thorne Bay. The largest community in the census area is Metlakatla which is located on Annette Island.

Employment in this census area has traditionally been concentrated in two industries, manufacturing and government. The manufacturing industry is made up of employers in logging and processing of timber as well as seafood processing employment, which is primarily fish cannery employment. Government employment in the region is dominated by local government entities, and most of this employment is education related.

One unusual occurrence in this census division, which combines the two leading industries, makes traditional industry employment analysis of the Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan census area inapplicable. The city of Metlakatla owns and operates one of the largest fish canneries in the census division. This complicates industry analysis because employment normally counted in the manufacturing industry is counted as government employment. The presence of this employment in government counteracts the normal seasonal trend in government as well as understates the relative importance of the fishing industry to the Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan census area.

Employment Growth 1981 to 1985

From 1981 to 1985 Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan ranked second among Southeast Alaska census areas in terms of percentage growth in wage and salary employment. Total employment grew 20.8% in the Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan census area during this time. Haines Borough was the fastest growing area in the region at 36.3%.

Industry employment growth in Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan was mixed during this period. Two industries, retail trade and government, accounted for most of the growth. However, other industries also experienced growth, which contributed to the overall good fortune of the Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan economy during the last five years.

Government contributed the most jobs to the areas economy from 1981 to 1985. Federal, state and local government all experienced growth, but local government was the largest gainer of the three. Federal government employment is dominated by the U.S. Forest Service, and all of the employment is based on Prince of Wales Island. The Postal Service and the Bureau of Indian Affairs also made some contribution but most of the growth occurring from 1981-85 is accounted for by the Forest Service. The increased presence of the Forest Service is partly due to the passage of the Alaska National Interest Land Conservation Act (ANILCA) in 1980. The role of the agency is to manage the timber and wildlife resources in the Tongass National Forest.

State government employment also experienced growth during this period, albeit slight. The two largest state agencies in terms of employment are the Department of Transportation and the Department of Fish and Game. Fish and Game's growth can be attributed to the management of the areas rich fishery while DOT/PF growth is related to ferry system and road maintenance employment.

Local government employment had the greatest growth in the region but with the Metlakatla cannery counted in this sector, the local government employment numbers are overstated. The Metlakatla cannery employs about 100 people on an annual average basis. Local government employment related to providing services to the areas communities, such as the school district and local governments, did experience growth during this period largely due to the generosity of the state government's operating budget in helping to finance local government expansion.

The city of Metlakatla reported a sharp increase in employment during the fourth quarter of 1985 which brought the local government annual average up by 75. This increase seems suspect at this point and would dramatically effect local government employment growth if employment turned out to be more in line with historical levels.

Secondary industries in Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan generally fared well in terms of employment growth from 1981-85. The only industries to decline in employment were transportation, and manufacturing. Retail trade experienced healthy growth due to increased construction related consumption and the beginning of an expanded tourism industry in the greater Ketchikan area. Services employment

**Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment
By Place of Work
Southeast Alaska**

	Changes From:				
	p/ 5/86	r/ 4/86	5/85	4/86	5/85
Nonag. Wage & Salary	30000	29050	29950	950	50
Construction	1600	1300	1750	300	-150
Manufacturing	3400	3250	3350	150	50
Food & Kindred Prod.	850	800	800	50	50
Lumber & Paper Prod.	2350	2250	2300	100	50
All Other Mfg.	200	200	250	0	-50
Trans. Comm. & Utilities	2050	1900	2150	150	-100
Trade	4600	4400	4600	200	0
Wholesale	400	350	400	50	0
Retail	4200	4050	4200	150	0
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	1100	1100	1100	0	0
Mining, Services & Misc.	4700	4450	4600	250	100
Government	12550	12650	12400	-100	150
Federal	2200	2100	2100	100	100
State	5550	5700	5600	-150	-50
Local	4800	4850	4700	-50	100

and the finance, insurance and real estate industries also experienced some strong growth due to these two factors.

Currently the outlook for future employment growth in the Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan area is mixed. Government employment, which has been the strongest underpinning of the areas economy, looks to be softer in the next few years, especially state and local government. If the forest products industry improves, the federal presence in the area may continue to grow.

Manufacturing, the areas next largest employer, will be fairly strong in the coming years, especially in the seafood sector of that industry. The wood products industry, at least at the present, seems to be holding its own, and that bodes well for the Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan economy. What happens in other industries will be dependent upon the fate of these two industries more than any other factor. Increasing tourism could play a role in the amount of employment in these industries in the future, but any effect it might have would probably be negligible in comparison to manufacturing and government.

**Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan
Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment
1981, 1983, 1985**

	1981	1983	1985	% Change 81-85
Nonag. Wage & Salary	1502	1544	1815	20.8%
Mining	*	*	*	-
Construction	17	50	49	188.2%
Manufacturing	572	554	524	-8.4%
Trans. Comm. & Utilities	100	52	93	-7.0%
Trade	*	*	*	-
Wholesale	*	*	*	-
Retail	102	118	158	54.9%
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	31	67	50	61.3%
Services & Misc.	82	111	127	54.9%
Government	559	589	750	34.2%
Federal	62	85	111	79.0%
State	20	25	31	52.9%
Local	477	479	608	27.5%

* Nondisclosable

Current Trends

Southeast Alaska wage and salary employment reached 30,000 in May, an increase of 950 jobs over April. Construction, manufacturing, services and trade all showed signs of summer growth, while government posted a decline in employment. Through May, Southeast is still showing slight employment growth when compared to last year. State government employment, the industry in Southeast most likely to be hit by declining oil revenues, is showing a slight decline in employment when compared to May 1985. Southeast unemployment dropped to 9.1 percent in May, down from the 10.0 percent rate posted in April. Southeast was the only region in the state to have an unemployment rate which was equal to or lower than one year ago.

Hours and Earnings

By John Boucher

Current Trends

Average weekly earnings in the construction industry during the month of May underline the current weakness on the Alaskan economy. Construction average weekly earnings and average weekly hours were down in May in comparison to April and last May. Lumber and paper products hours and earnings were up significantly as logging operations in Southeast Alaska got into full swing. Trade, both in the wholesale and retail sectors, is exhibiting much the same pattern as the construction industry, down over both last month and last year. The most dramatic change in average weekly earnings data is in the finance, insurance and real estate industry, but that is partially due to more sample being available for the industry.